

charged me to make the best entertainment I could for these learned gentlemen, and if the tongue be the key of knowledge, what could be so proper as a feast of tongues for a philosophical banquet.

Xanthus, finding that his friends were pleased with *Æsop's* answer, invited them to sup with him the next day, promising to provide a better entertainment; and then told *Æsop* that as he was set upon contradicting him, he might provide the *worst* things he could think of. But when the guests were assembled the next day, they found again repeated the service of tongues: when *Xanthus* being enraged, demanded with great heat, what could be the reason why tongues could one day be the best of meats, and the worst the next? 'Sir, said *Æsop*, the tongue bears
' a part and is principally concerned in all
' the wickedness upon earth; and you, Sir,
' have more reason than other men, both to
' know its mischievous and its excellent qualities, from your being both an husband
' and a philosopher. To what else is this
' banquet owing? whence arose the breach
' in your family, which has made your friends
' meet

beguile

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' meet here to rejoice over your reconciliation,
' but to an evil tongue? and is it not also
' owing to the tender and gentle expostulations
' of the tongue that you are now happy?
' and as you have experimentally found a
' tongue to be the best and worst entertainment, you have no reason to be displeased
' at your twice feasting upon it.'

Some time after, *Xanthus* being intoxicated with liquor, laid a wager that he would drink up the sea, which he confirmed, by giving, as a pledge of his performance, a valuable ring that he wore on his finger; but the next day being sensible of his folly, he was extremely uneasy, especially as he knew he was in such hands as would take an advantage of his folly; *Æsop*, however, undertook to bring him off, and reminded him, that as he had only conditioned to drink up the sea, but not the rivers and streams that flowed into it, he need only insist on his adversaries stopping them, and that then he would perform his promise. This advice *Xanthus* readily followed, and the persons who were to decide the wager agreeing that his plea was just, the ridicule fell on his antagonist, who was obliged to restore the ring.

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